

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 26, 35, and 47, as follows:

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~~26.~~ (Twice Amended) The developing assembly according to claim ²⁶~~25~~, further comprising a developer layer thickness control member for forming a thin [layer of the] developer layer on an outer surface of said developer carrying member.

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~~35.~~ (Twice Amended) The image forming apparatus according to claim ⁶²~~34~~, further comprising a developer layer thickness control member for forming a thin [layer of the] developer layer on an outer surface of said developer carrying member.

¹⁰²
~~47.~~ (Twice Amended) The process cartridge according to claim ¹⁰¹~~46~~, further comprising a developer layer thickness control member for forming a thin [layer of the] developer layer on an outer surface of said developer carrying member.

Please add Claims 126-138, as follows:

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~~N 126.~~ The developer carrying member according to claim 1, wherein said conductive spherical particles are produced by firing spherical resin particles having surfaces that are coated with bulk-mesophase pitch, thereby

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electric field at the developing zone, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on said outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between an electrostatic latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.

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132. The image forming apparatus according to claim ⁶²~~34~~, wherein said conductive spherical particles are produced by firing spherical resin particles having surfaces that are coated with bulk-mesophase pitch, thereby carbonizing and/or graphitizing the spherical resin particles.

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133. The image forming apparatus according to claim ⁶²~~34~~, further comprising means for generating a vibrating electric field at the developing zone.

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134. The image forming apparatus according to claim ⁹⁹~~133~~, further comprising a power source for applying an alternating bias voltage to said developer carrying member.

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135. The image forming apparatus according to claim ⁶³~~35~~, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on said outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between ^{said}~~an electrostatic~~ latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.

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63-⁶⁸136. The developing assembly according to claim 35, further comprising means for generating a vibrating electric field at the developing zone, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on an outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between ^{said} ~~an electrostatic~~ latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.

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¹⁰¹137. The process cartridge according to claim 46, wherein said conductive spherical particles are produced by firing spherical resin particles having surfaces that are coated with bulk-mesophase pitch, thereby carbonizing and/or graphitizing the spherical resin particles.

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¹⁰²138. The process cartridge according to claim 47, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on said outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between ^{said} ~~an electrostatic~~ latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone. (---)

REMARKS

Claims 1-32, 34-44, 46-55, and 57-138 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 25, 34, and 46 being independent. Claims 26, 35, and 47 have been amended, while Claims 126-138 are newly presented.